

THE MANDANS.

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The sixth group was that of the "Black-tail Deer" and 561 consisted of men over fifty years of age. There were two women in this band who served food and distributed fresh water during the dances. The men wore a crown of bears' claws.

There were a few other dances which were bought and sold, 561 but which hardly deserve a place in the regular system. One 424 of these was the dance of the "Half Shaven Head Band" which 535 the lowest band could buy before reaching the proper age to buy into the "Soldier Band." Another was the "Old Dog Dance." The "Dog Band" could buy this of the "Buffalo Band" before becoming Buffalos themselves or being able to. The "Hot Dance" was danced at Rouhptare by the youngest band, and also at the Hidatsa village where it was purchased from the Arikara. The dancers danced barefoot over live coals and plunged their hands into boiling water.

The women, too, were divided into bands. There were four 561 of these of which the first was "The Band of the Gun" which consisted of the younger girls. Next was the "River Band." The third band was the "Hay Women" who sang only the scalp dance. The fourth and last band was that of the "Women of the White Cow," most of them were old, and they were all tattooed with black lines from the mouth to the base of the chin. [304]

The marriage customs of the Mandan Indians differed little 595 from those of their neighbors. Polygamy was common, although a large part of the men had but one wife. Descent was 611 probably along the male line, though there may have been remains of an older custom of descent along the female line, for all the horses captured by a young man belonged to his sister. The women worked hard and were sometimes badly treated 562 though not as a general rule. Lewis and Clarke says that infidelity was punishable by death. Maximilian says it was punishable by cutting off the woman's nose. When a man's wife was stolen he had a right to demand a horse from the abductor. Separations occurred among them quite frequently. Virtue [586] among the women was held in high esteem but was rather 831 scarce. There are accounts of a celebration where prizes were 171 given to the virtuous maids — these celebrations also took place

● 831 among the Arikara and Hidatsa. The men boasted their love
171 exploits, and carried often about the village small bundles of sticks each representing a conquest, or one large stick with stripes indicating the number; this was also a Hidatsa custom.

585 When a man wished to marry, after obtaining the girl's and the father's consent, he led horses to the door of the father's house and tied them there. Then the father took the same number of his own horses and tied them to the young man's door. After this the girl cooked corn each day and carried it to the young man's house for a certain number of days. Then the young man went to the father's house and claimed his wife. The young people either built a new home or lived with one of their parents, in which case the father remained master of the house. On marrying an eldest sister, a man acquired the right of marriage over all the other sisters. Catlin tells us that the girls usually married at from twelve to fourteen years of age.

858 Children were never disciplined and were always humored
601 by their parents who seemed to be very fond of them. The
606 father's brother and sister were called father and mother. The
551 mother's sister was called mother and her brother uncle. Cousins called each other brother and sister. The mother-in-law was not permitted to address her son-in-law till he had come back with the scalp and gun of an enemy. Someone was usually paid to give the child his name, which was chosen by the parent.

776 RELIGION:—The religious ideas of the Mandans resemble in a number of respects both those of the Sioux and the Arikara. While there are a number of deities, there was one among them to whom special veneration was paid. This one, the creator of the earth and everything in it, and of men, was called the Lord of Life.¹ Next after him came the First Man to whom the Lord of Life gave great power and who acted as a sort of mediator for men. Catlin says he was the only person saved from the great deluge, and he played an important part in the Okepa. He was worshipped and sacrifices were made to him. Next was an evil spirit who, though powerful, ranks far below the First Man. Fourth on the list was Rokanka-Tauihanka

¹ Maximilian: p. 419.